intent to threaten the unity or integrity of India or to strike terror in any section of the people by using weapons and explosive substances or other methods in a manner as to cause or likely to cause death or injuries to any person or persons or loss or demage to property or disruption of essential supplies and services, etc. It also brings within its ambit the offences relating to organisations declared as terrorist organisations, financing of terorrism and possession of weapons of mass destruction etc.

Reservations expressed by various forums on POTO

1726. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the serious reservation expressed by the various political parties, some State Governments, several intellectual foras editors guild, journalists and lawyers on the provisions of Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO) promulgated recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government propose to discuss the provisions of POTO across the table and be willing to tone down some of the provisions objected to; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) Opinions both for and against the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, 2001 (POTO) have been expressed in different quarters. The Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, 2001 (POTO) will be discussed in Parliament when a Bill to replace the Ordinance is introduced during the current Session. The Government is prepared to consider specific suggestions in order to insure that innocent persons are not subjected to harassment/victimization. It is also proposed to discuss the Ordinance in an all party meeting before the replacement Bill is introduced.

Terrorist camps in PoK

†1727. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan is running training camps for the terrorists in Pak occupied Kashmir;

(b) if so, the necessary action taken by Government to destroy the said camps; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) According to available information, a number of training camps have been established in Pak Occupied Kashmir (POK) as also in Pakistan to train the terrorists operating in Jammu and Kashmir.

(b) and (c) India has taken up this matter with the Government of Pakistan. India has also apprised the international community about the existence of these training camps as well as about the support and sponsorship given by Pakistan to the terrorism directed against India. The international opinion against terrorism is growing by the day and there is a widespread recognition of the need to eradicate terrorism, wherever it exists.

Comparative study of POTO with similar Laws existing in States

1728. SHRI MAN MOHAN SAMAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some States have got POTO like laws with same nature and character and have not received any complaint of misuse of the same so far since their inception;

(b) whether Government have done any comparative study of the POTO with similar Laws existing in some States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (c) The State Governments of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh have enacted Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, 1999 and Andhra Pradesh Control of Organised Crime Act, 2001 respectively. The State Government of Karnataka is in the process of enacting similar legislation to combat organised crime. Some of the provisions of these laws are based on similar provisions in the erstwhile Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act. Since law and order is a State subject, the Central Government does not maintain information on complaints of misuse of laws enacted by the State Governments.

(d) While Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, 2001 is specifically aimed at combating terrorist activities, the laws referred to above deal essentially with control of organised crime. There are also differences in key provisions relating to bail, presumption of guilt, admissibility of confessions made by a person